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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3805

November 6, 2003

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Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

WTD
Public Safety
P.V.
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Chairman Michael K. Powell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Powell:

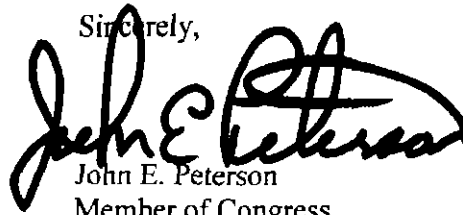
I have been hearing from public safety leaders in my district and around the country – local police officers, firefighters, emergency response personnel and other first responders – about the alarming issue of public safety interference. The fact that public safety officials are concerned about their safety and the safety of those they protect makes me extremely concerned. In this new era of increased homeland security, the need to equip our first responders with rapid and reliable communications is a top priority.

Interference to public safety communications is a growing problem in my district, and needs to be remedied in a comprehensive pro-active manner. We cannot continue with a “wait and see” approach to resolving interference as the risk to our public safety professionals and the American public is too great.

The fundamental cause of interference is the close proximity of public safety and commercial wireless operations within the 800 MHz spectrum band. In order to virtually eliminate the probability of interference occurring the 800 MHz spectrum needs to be realigned. I am interested in seeing a solution to this problem that accomplishes this goal while at the same time providing additional spectrum to public safety with no cost to the public safety organizations and local governments that are now struggling with limited resources. With lives on the line, we cannot afford to do anything less.

As time passes, our risks from this problem continue to grow. This is a critical issue for my constituents and our nation – I urge you to act expeditiously by putting the safety and effectiveness of public safety officials first.

Sincerely,


John E. Peterson
Member of Congress

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